

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Stokes Assembly Hall
1039 Wilmington Pike, Westtown Township
March 5, 2014 – 7:30PM

Call to Order

Mr. Pomerantz called the meeting to order at 7:30 and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present

Commissioners – Rodia, Whitig, Pomerantz, Hatton, Lees and Criddle. Absent was commissioner Adler. Also present were Planning Director Chris Patriarca, Township Manager Robert Layman, Township Engineer Regina Majercak from McCormick Taylor and those mentioned below.

Adoption of Agenda

The Agenda was adopted and approved as presented unanimously (JL/BW).

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Patriarca stated a memo was forwarded to the Board of Supervisors about the favorable recommendation to approve the *Open Space Plan* and that it would be considered at one of their May meetings. Mike Di Domenico requested that in future Planning Commission minutes Board members not be included as one of those present as they are appearing as private citizens not representing the Board. The minutes of the Planning Commission meeting of February 19, 2014, were approved as amended unanimously (RH/JL).

Mr. Pomerantz then made a second motion related to his comment from the February 19 meeting about the placement more prominently of “Westtown Township” at the top of all Westtown legal ads. The motion was subsequently approved unanimously (DP/SR).

Reports

Mr. Rodia presented the March 3 Board of Supervisors regular meeting. At the regular meeting it was noted the issues about the new recording system as well as the efforts of the road crew during the recent snow events. He then stated the Historic Commission membership was raised from five to seven and that the discussion moved towards storm cleanup throughout the Township. Finally Mr. Rodia mentioned the Thomas Minor Subdivision had been forwarded from the Board to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Pomerantz next presented the March 3 Board of Supervisors workshop. This meeting was called by the Board and included the chairs of the Planning, Historic and Parks & Rec Commissions. He stated the meeting was for the Board to express their desire to work more effectively with the Township's commissions. Further, Mr. Pomerantz indicated the Board wants to meet with the Commissions individually to identify both what is working and what needs to be addressed. Ultimately an annual organizational meeting is envisioned for all of the Commissions with each other and the Board.

Mr. Patriarca then presented the February 24 Bozzuto conditional use hearing. He noted the site design and layout testimony was completed and questions addressed. He then noted the March 18 hearing will focus on traffic related issues.

Announcements

Mr. Patriarca introduced Regina Majercak of McCormick Taylor as the new, alternate Township Engineer.

Mr. Pomerantz next discussed his conversation with John Jaros, who represents the Bozzuto group seeking a conditional use for an apartment complex on a portion of the Crebilly Farm. What was first discussed was what had changed in the Township between the CCRC application and the current one for apartments, to which Mr. Pomerantz stated that the difference is a much more involved public. Further

they discussed how information should be presented in terms of tone, how a better explanation of the relationship of the SUO would be beneficial and greater discussion on other potential uses of the property. Mr. Pomerantz then stated that if this could be done again, he would have liked to see them present their case to the Planning Commission at an earlier date.

Mr. Hatton provided information on a webinar about “mini-cell towers” available to the Planning Commission if requested.

Mr. Patriarca made a few announcements. The first was about comments from Brian Gallagher on the issue of fire safety and solar panels to which Mr. Patriarca indicated his comments would be incorporated and forwarded to the Planning Commission for their recommendation. Next he let the Commission know the both the Papenfuss Traffic Study, and the Thomas Minor Subdivision have been submitted and will be before the Commission at a later date. Mr. Pomerantz commented on the large crowd expected at the March 19 meeting and that the Planning Commission would convene a workshop at 7:00 to better prepare for the larger crowd. He further expressed the meeting would be the first step towards the Planning Commission working towards a formal recommendation as it represented the first substantive meeting with the applicant and the Commission on the Bozzuto proposal.

Non-agenda Public Comment

Bob Mastrovito, of 825 Sharon Circle – Discussed an article on housing in Chester County from the local newspaper and his thoughts on it. It discussed the five factors why persons move into Chester County, specific to higher home prices in the County. He also mentioned concerns with concerns with the Westtown Zoning Ordinance, specific to overall tract density, and how this is addressed as part of the Bozzuto application.

Dennis McFadden, of 1010 General Greene Drive – Requested clarification from Mr. Pomerantz on public comment at the Planning Commission and if the workshop was open to the public.

New Business

Election of Officer – *Planning Commission Secretary*

In their February 19 meeting, Ms. Adler recommended that Mr. Patriarca be formally elected as Planning Commission Secretary since he was now responsible for the coordination of a creation of minutes for the Planning Commission. As there is no restriction for a non-Planning Commission member to serve as secretary, Mr. Rodia made the motion in favor of Mr. Patriarca becoming Secretary. Mr. Criddle seconded and the motion passed ^{unanimously}.

Westtown Township PC mission/purpose statement

Mr. Pomerantz indicated the reason for this exercise is to clarify exactly what the role of the Westtown Planning Commission. In order to do this, Mr. Patriarca provided some examples of other statements and the Commission forwarded their ideas to form the basis of the conversation. First discussed was the Chester County statement. Mr. Lees asked about if Westtown’s should coordinate with the County’s statement. Mr. Patriarca responded there will be similarities and coordination with Chester County at times, but that the statement should reflect Westtown specifically, even if it does not conform to the County’s mission. Mr. Rodia noted the Westtown Plan does dovetail nicely with the Chester County Plan.

Next discussed was the York County statement. Mr. Criddle questioned what “institutional environments” meant in the context of York. Mr. Pomerantz then discussed if economic development should play a role in the decision-making of the planning commission. The Commission did not feel economic development as a whole was under the purview of the Commission. However, there was unanimous agreement the Commission should consider the “net economic benefit” to the Township when evaluating land use applications. Next discussed was if the role of the Commission is to reflect a public consensus. The

Commission stated consensus is an element, but is not always feasible. Mr. Rodia further emphasized consensus is context based by nature and will differ from place to place throughout the Township. Walter Pavelchek noted that a true consensus is not possible due to the lack of public participation throughout the Township at time when discussing land use issues.

Next discussed was the Union County statement. First discussed was the notion of “orderly growth.” In the context of Westtown orderly growth involves having the tools in place through zoning and the comprehensive plan to handle the high growth of the community.

Next discussed was the Roanoke County statement. The Commission favored the inclusions of “continuous process” and “protecting the public health, safety, convenience, and welfare” as part of the statement.

Next discussed was the information and thoughts provided by Mr. Hatton. Mr. Hatton worked to help define the role of the Commission in the context of the community and the Township. Mr. Criddle liked the notion of the Commission serving as a community advocate. Specifically as an advocate for the comprehensive plan and existing ordinances. Mr. Pavelchek noted his concerns with some of the wording such as “improving” and with making potential promises that cannot be kept. Mr. Pomerantz responded to this point, that with a recognition that growth is likely to continue, what types of amenities and/or infrastructure should be included in development projects to continue to either maintain or improve quality of life. Mr. Pavelchek responded language stating “integrate development in the best interests of the community” should be considered.

Mr. Criddle then referenced the mission statement of the Growth Management Plan and to maintain the high quality of life. Mr. Pomerantz then expressed that if we seek to only “maintain” and not “improve” quality of life that it not exclude new technologies that will enhance the community. Mr. Patriarca then expressed his opinion that “quality of life” is something that evolves with time as determined by the community. Mr. Di Domenico then expressed that he viewed the Commission as working towards “practical” and/or “realistic” growth.

Next discussed was the information and thoughts provided by Mr. Criddle. Mr. Hatton expressed his opinion that what was presented was too long for a mission statement, but that it expressed the duties of the Commission. Mr. Pavelchek expressed that at as a citizen it provided a good overview of the Commission does.

Next discussed was the information and thoughts provided by Mr. Pomerantz. Mr. Criddle liked the comprehensiveness of the statement as it gives a full picture to the citizens as to the role of the Commission. The conversation next discussed concise mission statements versus a more outlined role of what the Commission does. Ms. Majercak stated a mission statement should include the Commission is a citizen board and the role following the statement. She further stated including natural (green) and historic resources are important for inclusion with other items important to the community as well as to foster growth consistent with the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Pavelchek stated that “volunteer” needs to appear somewhere in the final statement. Mr. McFadden indicated it is important to have a short mission statement and follow it with responsibilities and goals to better educate the citizens the role of the Commission. Mr. Patriarca indicated he would synthesize the discussion and use that as the basis of the mission statement and role of the Commission and bring it back to the Commission in the future.

Public Comment

Walter Pavelchek, of 1050 South New Street – Suggested a bulletin board be placed in the lobby to post meeting materials and post meeting materials prior to the meeting.

Adjournment

9:18pm (JL/SR)